

**From:** Juanita Bergh  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
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**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

I have been and still am rather disgusted at the lawsuit against Microsoft. At the time the lawsuit was filed, I was not an employee of Microsoft. Now I am, but my feelings have not changed. I worked for a software company for 10.5 years before joining Microsoft. We used Netscape as a browser for a short period, but then our company switched to Internet Explorer. I don't recall at what point that was. But at the time I was using Netscape, the browser was given away free as an incentive to get people to switch to using their browser. Does this sound familiar? Isn't this part of Netscape/AOL Time Warner's complaint against Microsoft? That by offering it free and making it available as part of the operating system, Microsoft is engaging in non-competitive acts. Hmmm. I wonder why it wasn't illegal when Netscape was first trying to gain market share. That's the main reason we used Netscape, it was free and relatively easy to use. However, we found the Internet Explorer worked better for us. There are differences and distinctions between the two that I'm not terribly familiar with as I have no desire to see if Netscape has become more attractive. I have heard that Netscape offers an easy way of uploading data, which isn't available in IE. I also have heard that Mac users prefer Netscape. The browser that fills the need best is the browser that will be used.

The last couple of times we purchased a computer, it came preloaded with a several different internet connectivity options. We did not choose to use any of them because we wanted to use a different one.

The fact of the matter is, that if someone wants to use a software product, they will use it whether it comes preinstalled or not. It's not as though we're talking about a couple hundred dollars to purchase Netscape; I can download it today for free. I'm not sure if Netscape used to have a charge or what those charges are, but it's rather hypocritical to complain about someone else giving something away free when you're doing the same thing. As I said earlier, who cares if it's preloaded or not; many users today are sophisticated enough that they'll find and load what they want.

Another complaint that bugs me in the lawsuit states that OEM's cannot really add much to change the way windows loads; this really irks me because I don't want to get a different look and feel from windows based on the hardware that I purchase! Is that user-friendly? We had a Packard-Bell that loaded a bunch of junk from PB and it drove us crazy, we disabled it because we didn't want it. I want to be able to purchase hardware based on price, not how it interacts with the os that I choose!! There's also the issue of support and service packs; who's going to support those changes? The OEM? Microsoft? Do I get pushed back

and forth because the OEM says it's not their problem and Microsoft says it's been changed so they can't help either? There is nothing worse than trying to support a product that has been modified; all your updates are delayed, because when Microsoft releases a fix, the OEM has to do the same thing. I know how this works; I worked for a software company in the support area for 5 years and you cannot support something once someone else has modified it. This is NOT in the consumer's best interests for any software company to allow that. I know that it happens and it has it's advantages, but it's also a miserable position for the consumer who needs an update or help.

I have worked in the computer industry for 11.5 years now and I am tickled that consumers have pretty much selected one OS that we can use as a basis for developing our own applications. The macintosh died in the business application market because Apple's focus appears to be the graphic / educational market. We used to support our applications on the macintosh for many years, but finally discontinued that because it just wasn't a good business proposition for us. Many, many software companies have thrived by developing on the Microsoft platforms because Microsoft is the company that bothers to find out what consumers want and strives to give it to us. That's why Microsoft thrived and Apple did not. Apple had great potential and is doing fine, but they could've been the Microsoft.

Netscape/ AOL Time Warner would be smarter to use their money to improve their products so they can compete based on the products' merit, not to try to cripple a successful rival.

One more comment on the 'monopoly' issue. Microsoft is not a phone company or utility company where the customer has never had a choice; Microsoft has earned it's OS monopoly because no other OS has provided customers with what they want. We love to bash Microsoft (well, not since I've become an employee) for system bombs and crashes, but the fact remains that Microsoft has made it possible for millions of users to be able to use and afford a computer. My parents, in-laws, and grandparents, who never grew up using a computer are able to use email and word processing programs because it's easy, simple, and uniform. I can help them figure things out with a phone call because the OS behaves the same way no matter what type of computer they have! My grandparents would never have thought of using a computer in the pre-windows days.

Microsoft contributes a great deal of money, software and time for charitable issues; if anyone has the issues of the consumer at heart, it's Microsoft.

Thanks for listening,

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